



Friends of the Louisiana Whooping Cranes

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

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4th Cohort of Whooping Cranes Welcomed to Louisiana

On December 11, 2013 the state of Louisiana welcomed 10 new juvenile whooping cranes to the White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area located south of Gueydan. The newest cohort of cranes consisted of 7 males and 3 females. In the previous newsletter it was reported that the state would receive 11 cranes in this group, however, it was decided shortly prior to their Louisiana arrival to retain one bird in a captive setting due to a recent leg surgery.

As with the previous crane arrivals, the birds were flown into the Jennings airport on a private plane and transported to White Lake. They were then placed within the top-netted pen and allowed time to transition to their new Louisiana home. Within three days of their arrival, each bird was hand captured and fitted with 1 or 2 transmitters and varying colored leg bands used for identification purposes.

The 10 juvenile cranes were then released from the top-netted pen on January 2, 2014. The 10 birds continue to utilize the pen area but are free to fly between the outside and inside of the pen (see photo below). The birds will be monitored daily to document behavioral trends and social structure. It is expected as with past cohorts, that the birds will leave the White Lake refuge impoundment area when the supplemental food sources cease in February, or when the marsh begins to dry up in the Spring.



Outside looking in? Or inside looking out? The newest group of cranes investigating all sides of the pen. January 2, 2014.

Since You Last Read...an Update on the 2010, 2011, and 2012 Louisiana Whooping Cranes



5-11 at the pen site on January 2, 2014 .

The birds from 2010-2012 continue to do well on the Louisiana landscape. As of this printing, the birds are currently using Avoyelles, Rapides, Evangeline, Jefferson Davis, Vermilion, and Cameron Parishes.

Interesting notes include 2 separate male/female pairs. The two separate pairs appear to be forming a bond with their respective other, however no definitive mating rituals such as nest construction has been observed. We will continue to let you know if things materialize between the two pairs.

A couple of days before Christmas an adult bird from the 2011 cohort returned to the pen. 5-11 has been observed everyday in or around the pen site since his late December arrival. He seems to be interacting with the 10 juveniles cranes well (if waiting for an opportunity to grab a bite of food counts). Up until this point, for several of the juvenile cranes, their day is comprised of them standing within close proximity to the feeding platform (standing guard if you will) while 5-11 anxiously awaits for the changing of the guards and his moment to grab a crane chow bite or two (if time allows.)

You may remember that this is not the first adult bird that has visited the pen while juveniles were present. L4-10 revisited the pen while the 2011 cohort was there and his presence turned out to be quite behaviorally instrumental to the younger adult males. We will continue to monitor 5-11's interactions with the younger cranes and let you know what the outcome is next issue.

Louisiana Whooping Crane Population Totals

Louisiana Whooping Crane Totals As of December 2013: 33/50=66%

2010
Survival: 1/10= 10%

2011
Survival: 12/16= 75%

2012
Survival: 10/14= 71%

2013
Survival: 10/10=100%

October-December 2013 Friends of the Cranes

A special thanks to our monetary donors, without whom this project would not be possible. The following individuals have made monetary donations to support the reintroduction of whooping cranes to southwest Louisiana:

**Paul Dickson, Sammy King, Joan Hebert, Bob Love, Josephine Nixon,
Windway Corporation, & Exxon Mobil Pipeline**

Also a **very special thanks** to **Kell McInnis and the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation** for administering the distribution of our donated/awarded whooping crane funds. If you or someone you know would like to make a donation in support of the cranes, please contact Kell at 225-765-5100, kmcinnis@wlf.la.gov, or visit the Foundation's website directly at <http://lawff.org/>



Louisiana Whooping Crane Science Fair Project Places Third in the State

Congratulations to Chance Lyon from Southfield School located in Shreveport for placing in the Junior Division of the 2013 Louisiana Science and Engineering Fair.

The sixth-grader received Third Place in Environmental Management for his project, "Can Whooping Cranes Be Re-introduced Into Louisiana?" Chance also received the Award for Excellence in Agriculture-Related Research from the LSU Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society of Agriculture.



George Rodrigue Foundation Art Contest Promotes Whooping Cranes and Other Louisiana Species

The George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts (GRFA) will provide \$45,000 in college scholarships **and** awards to students whose artwork best represents Louisiana's beauty. The theme for the 2014 contest is: **LOUISIANA'S NATURAL BEAUTY**.

All juniors and seniors in Louisiana are eligible for entry in the GRFA Art Contest. Seniors must be enrolled in college for the fall 2014 semester in order to receive scholarship funds. Juniors will receive a cash scholarship towards future college expenses.

Although any natural beauty design will be accepted, the Rodrigue Foundation has taken extra steps to promote or encourage entries that focus on certain Louisiana species including the American alligator, Whooping crane, Louisiana black bear, and the Louisiana live oak. Facts and pictures of each species are available on the art contest website in order to help students familiarize themselves with these particular species.

So Louisiana juniors and seniors get out those pens, papers, and cameras and help support your Louisianan natural beauty. Hurry though, the deadline for online application and photo of art submissions must be received **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 12, 2014**.

For complete contest rules, please refer to the GFFA website:
<http://www.georgerodriguefoundation.org/site452.php>

New Educational Item for 2014

This is the front and back image of cards that have been made for distribution at outreach events. Thank you Chevron for your continued support of Louisiana whooping crane education and awareness.



The educational card is divided into two main sections. The left section features artwork of three cranes: a Whooping Crane, a Sandhill Crane, and a juvenile Whooping Crane. The right section contains text about whooping cranes and a circular logo for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. The bottom of the card has a green banner with the title 'Louisiana Cranes' and a URL.

Whooping Crane

Sandhill Crane

Whooping Crane (juvenile)

Artwork by Jay Jocham, www.looseanimals.com

Louisiana Cranes

WHOOPING CRANES RETURN TO LOUISIANA

WHOOPING CRANES

- ~5 ft tall
- White with black wing tips and a red head
- Live in LA year round

LOUISIANA

WILDLIFE & FISHERIES

DEPARTMENT OF

SANDHILL CRANES

- ~4 ft tall
- Gray with a red forehead and white cheeks
- Migrate to LA for the winter

<http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/wildlife/whooping-cranes>

Chevron

Human Energy

This newsletter is written by Carrie Salyers, LDWF Biologist and Education and Outreach Coordinator